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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Washington 25, D. C.

AMS INSTRUCTION No. 223-4
Rev. 1

ACTION BY: All Field Offices

Use of Certified Mail

AUG 12 1957

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

I PURPOSE

This Instruction informs AMS field offices of the certified mail service, and outlines procedures for its use in AMS offices outside of Washington, D. C. AMS Instruction No. 223-4, dated July 12, 1955, is superseded.

II DESCRIPTION

A Purpose of New Service. Certified mail service was inaugurated on June 7, 1955, to provide, for domestic use, a service similar to but more economical than registered mail. Certified mail service provides for a receipt of mailing to the sender and a record of delivery at the post office of address. A delivery receipt signed by the addressee is obtainable upon payment of the required fee.

B Class of Mail to Which Applicable.

1 Only first-class letter mail having no intrinsic (monetary or appraised) value is accepted for certification. This includes articles of a nonnegotiable character, and material the duplication of which would involve a cost if it were lost or destroyed.

2 Certified mail may be sent by air upon payment of the prescribed additional postage.

C Fees for Certified Mail. Charges for certified mail are as follows:

	<u>Cents</u>
*-Fee (in addition to postage)	20
Return receipts (in addition to fee)	
Requested at time of mailing:	
Showing to whom and when delivered	10
Showing to whom, when, and address where delivered	35
Requested after mailing:	
Showing to whom and when delivered	25
Restricted Delivery	50-*

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III DETERMINATION OF SERVICE TO BE USED

In determining whether to send a particular letter by certified or registered mail, the sender is responsible for taking into consideration the relative merits of the two services, such as total cost, safeguards provided, and the adequacy and permanency of records. Factors in addition to those covered above which enter into the decision include the following:

A Minimum Registration Fee. *-The minimum registration fee for registered mail is 50 cents as compared to the certified mail fee of 20 cents.--*

B Records and Safeguards. Records are kept by the post office from which registered mail is sent, by intermediary handlers, and by the office of address (destination post office); and special safeguards enroute are provided as required. Certified mail, however, is handled with the ordinary first class mail. A record is made at the destination post office and retained for only six months after delivery of the letter.

C Types of Mail To Be Certified. Certified mail service is particularly adapted to mailing of letters or documents having no intrinsic value, where for legal or other reasons a receipt showing date of mailing and/or a receipt signed by the addressee is required, or where proof of delivery (without a return receipt) would not be required beyond the 6-month retention period.

* * *

IV MAILING PROCEDURE

A Payment of Fees and Postage. A certified mail stamp is available for the *-20-cent-* fee. However, the fee and other charges including postage may be paid by ordinary postage stamps, meter stamps, or permit imprints.

B Where to Mail. Certified letters may be (1) mailed at a post office, branch, or station; (2) given to a rural carrier; or (3) deposited in mail drops or letter boxes, provided the specific directions in paragraph C below are followed (see particularly C 4 b).

C How to Mail. Small supplies of blank certified mail coupons (Receipt for Certified Mail, POD Form 3800) and return receipt forms

(IV C)

(POD Form 3811) may be obtained free at any post office. Each coupon is numbered when received. To prepare a letter for certified mail service, the sender shall follow the procedure outlined below.

1 Payment for and Indication of Services. Attach to the envelope enough postage or meter stamps or a meter imprint to pay for the certified mail fee, return receipt fee (if required), first-class postage, and special delivery (if required).

2 Receipt for Certified Mail. Enter on the receipt portion of the Receipt for Certified Mail the name and complete address of the person or firm to whom the letter is addressed. If a return receipt is desired, also check the block on this coupon marked *-"10¢"-* or the block marked *-"35¢"-*, as appropriate. (The *-"10¢"-* receipt will show to whom and when delivered. The *-"35¢"-* receipt will show also the address to which delivered.)

3 Return Receipt. If a return receipt is required, (a) enter the certified mail number (which is stamped on the Receipt for Certified Mail) in the designated space on the return receipt card; (b) enter the sender's name and address in the spaces provided; (c) check the block marked "Show address where delivered" at the top of the reverse side of the card, if the sender needs to know the address to which the letter is delivered (*-"35¢"-* receipt); and (d) attach the card to the back of the envelope by sticking the gummed edges (or, if this type of card is not available, attach by stapling - paper clips not being satisfactory for this purpose).

4 Postmarked Sender's Receipt.

a If a postmarked sender's receipt is desired, (1) stick the gummed stub of the certified mail sticker reading "CERTIFIED MAIL NO. _____" to the address side of the envelope directly above the address, leaving the receipt coupon attached, and (2) present the letter (with postage, return receipt card (if any), and the completed certified mail coupon affixed) to the postal employee. He will postmark, date, and initial the coupon and return it to the sender. This coupon is the sender's receipt of transmittal, and he should keep it.

b If a postmarked sender's receipt is not desired, (1) attach the certified mail sticker to the envelope as specified above; (2) detach the receipt portion of the coupon; (3) enter the

(IV C 4 b)

mailing date in the space provided on the coupon; and (4) retain the coupon as the record of mailing. The letter may then be deposited in any mail box. (Attention is called to the fact that this method of mailing does not provide a receipt bearing the postmark and mailing date. For this reason, it is recommended that certified mail be taken directly to post offices as outlined in the preceding paragraph.)

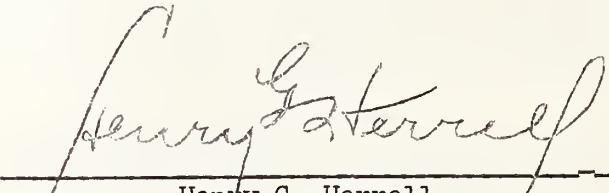
5 Mailing Books. AMS offices which have occasion to use certified mail frequently, and to send several letters at one time, may use mailing books, to eliminate the necessity for preparing individual receipts. Information on the use of mailing books may be obtained from the post Office.

V DELIVERY PROCEDURE

Delivery rules for certified mail are very much like those for registered mail. Mail for delivery by carriers is taken on the first trip after receipt at the post office. The carrier leaves a notice of arrival if for any reason he cannot deliver the certified letter, and returns the letter to the post office. If the letter is not called for by the addressee within the time specified by the sender, or within 15 days if no time is specified, it is returned to the sender. The delivery record is destroyed by the post office at the end of six months.

VI INQUIRY PROCEDURE

The sender may inquire about loss of a certified letter by presenting his Receipt for Certified Mail coupon at the post office and completing Post Office Department Form 1510, Inquiry for the Loss or Rifling of Mail Matter. * * * In the event the return receipt which he requested (Section IV C 3) is not received by the sender after a reasonable time he can request another one, without charge, by presenting the Receipt for Certified Mail coupon at the post office.



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